

Scott Myers-Lipton. *Rebuild America: Solving the Economic Crisis through Civic Works*. Paradigm Publishers, 2009. Pp. 160. \$17.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1594517228

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The book is a good case study as to how educators can transform theory into action that will improve society. Using this model, activists, scholars, artists, and citizens can take direct action in the political arena of everyday life.

However, this form of direct action needs to be situated within a broader radical model of new socioeconomic relations that would provide structural long-term reform. For example, a libertarian socialist would envision models of movement building similar to those developed in the book but tied to broader goals of fundamental social change, based on the principles of local self-direction and self-organization, as well as political and economic democracy.

The book makes no mention of how proposed massive civic works programs would be financed and sustained at the state level, let alone on a national scale. Again, the reason for the omission is obvious. Because the rich and the corporations control the political process and dominate the economy, they will avoid paying for public projects. The New Deal Era civic programs described by the author were in large part a response to the threat of revolution rather than being prompted by a desire for social justice. Today there is little sense that revolt is imminent, and therefore there is no pressure to act. The solutions proposed in this book fall short, like all projects and proposals that fail to confront the true cause of poverty and crumbling public infrastructure: capitalism. Only structural

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